

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 962

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINS ET XF

SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN FONMIN DISCUSSES FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT IN ERITREA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 10323 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: DURING SEPT. 15 PRESS CONFERENCE, FONMIN KIFLE WODAJO EXPANDED ON PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANT'S REFERENCE IN REVOLUTION DAY SPEECH (ADDIS ABABA 10272 NOTAL) TO INVOLVEMENT OF "OUTSIDE FORCES" IN ERITREA. END SUMMARY:

1. KIFLE SAID INTERFERENCE TOOK FORM OF SUPPLYING MATERIAL AND WEAPONS, AND PROVIDING TRAINING TO ELF MEMBERS. ALTHOUGH ETHIOPIA HAD IN PAST BEEN RELUCTANT TO IDENTIFY COUNTRIES INVOLVED, HE COULD NOW LIST IRAQ, SYRIA, KUWAIT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND TUNISIA, SINCE THEY THEMSELVES HAVE OFFICIALLY IND-

CATED THEIR SUPPORT FOR SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT. OTHER COUNTRIES WERE ALSO INTERFERING, BUT HE WOULD NOT IDENTIFY THEM, SINCE THEY HAD NOT IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES.

2. KIFLE SAID EPMG KEPT MANY AFRICAN GOVTS INFORMED OF NATURE, MAGNITUDE, AND OBJECTIVES OF INTERVENTIONS FROM VARIOUS ARAB COUNTRIES. AT AFRO-ARAB FONMIN CONFERENCE IN DAKAR LAST DAY HE HAD ALSO STRESSED THAT THIS TYPE INTERFERNECE WAS TO BE AVOIDED IN INTEREST OF BUILDING AFRO-ASIAN COOPERATION ON BASIS OF ARAB RESPECT FOR AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS AND VICE VERSA. HE CLAIMED THAT, IN CONTRAST TO ARAB INSENSITIVITY FOR SOVEREIGNTY OF AN AFRICAN PEOPLE, ALL AFRICAN GOVTS HAVE SUPPORTED ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. KIFLE THREATENED THAT CONTINUED INTERFERENCE WOULD PROMPT ETHIOPIAN INITIATIVE BEFORE LONG THROUGH OAU TO "ACQUAINT PEOPLES OF AFRICA WITH MYSTERIOUS NATURE OF THESE INTERFERENCES."

3. KIFLE MAINTAINED THAT ONLY FORCES WHO SOUGHT TO WEAKEN CONSOLIDATION OF REVOLUTIONARY FORCES IN ETHIOPIA WOULD WANT TO USE ERITREAN SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT AS POINT OF ENTRY. AS EVIDENCE, HE CLAIMED THAT NOT UNTIL PAST TWO YEARS HAD WESTERN PRESS BEGUN TO PUBLICIZE AND SHOW SYMPATHY FOR MOVEMENT, EVEN THOUGH LATTER HAD BEEN OPERATING FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. WHILE EPMG REJECTED CLAIMS OF ELF-PLF TO BE EITHER POPULAR OR LIBERATING ORGANIZATIONS, GOVT PREPARED TO OPEN DIALOGUE TO EXTENT THEY REFLECT QUEST FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND EXPRESSION OF ERITREAN CULTURE. AFTER ALL, ETHIOPIAN NINE-POINT PROGRAM WAS DESIGNED TO BE RESPONSIVE TO SUCH DESIRES.

4. KIFLE PAID SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO SUDANESE PRESIDENT GAAFAR NIMEIRI'S EFFORTS TO HELP RESOLVE ERITREAN PROBLEM. HE SAID MINEIRI HAD DEPLOYED HIS BEST EFFORTS TO GET OTHER SIDES TO TAKE UP DIALOGUE WITH EPMG. THOUGH UNSUCCESSFUL TO DATE, EPMG STILL BELIEVED NIMEIRI'S EFFORTS COULD BECOME PRODUCTIVE, AND ITS CONFIDENCE IN HIM WAS UNIMPAIRED.

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5. COMMENT: KIFLE'S WARNING TO CERTAIN ARAB COUNTRIES WAS UNMISTAKABLE. HIS IMMINENT VISIT TO UNGA IN NEW YORK WILL GIVE HIM AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS HIS CASE WITH OTHER AFRICAN (AND ARAB) COUNTRIES. MOREOVER, HIS THREAT TO BRING MATTER TO OAU ATTENTION IS NOT IDLE ONE, GIVEN CURRENT SENSITIVITY THROUGHOUT AFRICA TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN PURELY AFRICAN PROBLEMS. END COMMENT.

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